

SPEECH

OF

DANIEL WHITTLE HARVEY, ESQ.

WHEN M.P. FOR COLCHESTER,

ON MOVING FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE

TO INQUIRE INTO

THE CROWN LANDS,

DELIVERED IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MARCH 30TH, 1830.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE current of economical reform has at length set in, and only requires to be directed by stout hearts and skilful hands to bear a rich harvest of reward. The labours of gone-by men—the pioneers who encountered the hesitation of the timid, and the contumely of the corrupt—are easily traceable in the speeches of the senate, and the reports of committees; and if these are carefully and judiciously examined, the task of reform to all men of the present day will be of easy accomplishment. Those who achieve great ends are rarely the men who design them; the reapers of the harvest are not generally those who have prepared the soil and cast the seed; and with very few exceptions the meed of public approval is rarely placed upon the heads of those who have borne the heat and burden of the day. Where is the man, or any set of men, either as a party or as an association, whose untiring industry, and disdain of petulant reproach, has accomplished so much, and whose labours are now beginning to tell so well, who can be compared with Mr. Hume? Well nigh forty years has this sleepless veteran passed in the unpaid service of his country, not unfrequently abused, and often neglected, by parties whose political and personal interests were advanced by his disinterested and unacknowledged advocacy. Happily for Mr. Hume, he has always been in circumstances which placed him beyond the allurements of office and the suspicion of necessity. At an humble distance, but with a steady step, I toiled for more than twenty years in the same field, bringing my habits of application and inquiry to bear

upon subjects which were too laborious and unattractive, and, in their personal bearing, too damaging, to engage the attention of Members whose alliance with party and family open a ready road to lucrative, and for the most part easy occupation, while at the same time they presented no allurements to the rampant tribe of politicians, who were too intent upon external demonstrations to hamper themselves with motions or committees to investigate palpable grievances, with a view to their correction. Bitter and excursive speeches, abounding in sweeping charges and airy plausibilities, are the cheap weapons of their warfare, and which are so wielded as to dazzle rather than to strike. The truth of this remark might be easily illustrated, by pointing to the parliamentary career of nearly all our successful lawyers, who have either attained the prizes of their ambition, or are still in pursuit of them. Not that they are slow to admit the enormous oppression of the law, nor to hurl opprobrium upon a stubborn antagonist, when it will suit their own views, or those of their party; but to expect from such men a sincere and earnest desire to effect any measure of efficient reform, which might by any possibility impede their progress to power, or embarrass them in the possession of it, would be as feasible as to hope for a measure from the bench of bishops to endow the working clergy out of their episcopal resources. At the present moment there are not fewer than half a dozen common law and equity Judges, who have acted in Parliament with the Whigs, and called themselves liberal reformers; and twice that number are now in the House, steering their course to the same destiny, not one of whom has, or ever will, propose a plan, or bring in a bill, which shall have for its object the simplification and economical administration of justice in our various courts of jurisprudence.* Indeed, this wary class of

* The names of Denman, Langdale, Wilde, Rolfe, Maule, and Erle will occur to the reader as Whig Reformers, not one of whom ever pursued any other direction than that here indicated.

politicians not only withhold a helping hand from every measure which savours of legal reform, but they take good care to disarm and destroy any one who shall dare to disturb the mercenary monopoly of existing institutions. Whatever may be their differences of opinion in other respects, and on other subjects, in their efforts to uphold this policy they are unanimous; and I shall have occasion, at no distant day, to illustrate this incontrovertible fact.*

In a firm and unflinching spirit I grappled with palpable abuses; and though opposed with rancorous hostility, I succeeded in abolishing scandalous impositions in the practice and constitution of the Court of Exchequer.† I brought to light the selfish mismanagement of Queen Anne's Bounty, and induced certain Bishops to supply the deficiency from their own pockets, and which they are still paying. In spite of a threatened ministerial crisis I abolished the Pension List. I succeeded in obtaining a Select Committee to inquire into the Public Charities, and exposed that costly delusion, the Charity Commission; I was the first to move that a list of Divisions be published; and eventually I succeeded in getting together a body of information concerning the Crown Lands, and Woods and Forests, of the greatest interest, and, as it will appear, of the greatest value; and though the crushing confederacy of the two great State factions has succeeded in placing me out of Parliament, I rejoice in the opportunity thus afforded of being allowed to aid the great work of Financial Reform, so appropriately begun under the auspices of Mr. Cobden. The Liverpool society will find in the property now brought under consideration

* I shall in a few weeks publish "No Wrong without a Remedy," a Fallacy; in which the conduct of Radical lawyers and Whig judges will be unreservedly noticed.

† At the time I brought this subject before the House, it was the invariable practice to give fees to five Counsel in every case, however trivial, although only one or two might attend; also to pay each Special Juror two guineas when a verdict was found for the Crown, but only one when for the defendant; and further, the Crown insisted upon the right to *select*, and would not allow the practice of striking a jury. All these errors were corrected through my exertions.

ample resources wherewith to meet any deficiency which their monetary plan may temporarily create.

It is important that the Committee recently re-appointed to inquire into the state of the Crown Lands—over whom Lord Duncan appropriately presides—should be fully aware of the extent and circumstances of the Crown Property as they existed at the time, and which have occurred since my motion in March, 1830. It is no presumption to state that my labours have rendered all investigation unnecessary anterior to that period. If the estates of the Crown had descended to myself as heir, or by devise, it would have been impossible for me to have obtained a more copious or satisfactory exposition of their nature, extent, and locality, than is to be found in the Return which was eventually made at my instance.

For some months previous to the delivery of my speech in Parliament, I had directed my attention to this important subject; not only reading every page of the seventeen folio Reports made by the Crown Commissioners, whose labours closed in the year 1786, but I also visited several of the principal properties therein described; and thus placed myself in a position to challenge contradiction—should the same be given—as to the gross mismanagement and profligate perversion of this great branch of our national resources.

On the 30th of March, 1830, I moved “That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Land Revenues of the Crown, under the Management of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, and to Report their opinion as to the means by which they might be rendered most available for the Public Service.”

It would indeed be at variance with all experience to infer that this motion was not opposed, and that successfully. Blows heavy and frequent must be made upon the strongholds of corruption before they finally give way, and even then every impediment that can be devised by official tactics is thrown in the way of an onward course. Such was the case upon this occasion;

the motion was successfully resisted, there being 62* for, and 98 against it.

It will be seen by the Division that the leading Whigs—then in opposition and now in power—supported my motion, and it would indeed be as singular as gratifying if their subsequent conduct had redeemed their party from the unworthy practice of saying and doing things while in opposition which they too readily repudiate when sincerity becomes inconvenient. Though thus defeated I was not dismayed, and on the 5th of July following I repeated my motion, by way of Address to the Crown, setting forth in a substantive form the requisite information. This motion was conceded on the eve of a general election, and gave birth to a Report which, for amplitude and minuteness, is not to be surpassed by any document which has ever been laid upon the table of the House of Commons. It is folio in form, exceeds eight hundred pages, and was ordered, at my instance, to be printed on the 9th of February, 1831.

But though Parliament and the country were thus apprised of the extent and importance of the Crown property, as also of its censurable abuse, it will be seen that the subsequent conduct

*M I N O R I T Y.

Althorpe, Lord Viscount	Graham, Sir J., Bart.	Palmer, C. T.
Baring, B.	Guise, Sir W., Bart.	Pendarves, E.
Beaumont, T. W.	Howiek, Lord Viscount	Poyntz, W. S.
Benett, J.	Hobhouse, J. C.	Price, R.
Bentinek, Lord G.	Honywood, W.	Prothero, E.
Baring, F.	Howard, H.	Pusey, P.
Birch, Joseph	Harvey, D. W. }	Rickford, W.
Bernal, Ralph	Hume, Joseph }	Rumbold, C. E.
Burdett, Sir F.	Jephson, C. V. O. }	Rowley, Sir W., Bart.
Brownlow, C.	Knight, R.	Robinson, Sir G., Bart.
Colborne, N. R.	Lamb, Hon. G.	Russell, Lord J.
Davies, Colonel	Lambert, J. S.	Seabright, Sir J., Bart.
Dawson, Alexander	Lennard, T. B.	Smith, W.
Denison, W. J.	Lumley, J. S.	Thompson, C. Poulett
Davenport, E. D.	Lloyd, Sir E. P., Bart.	Townshend, Lord Chas.
Du Cane, P.	Majoribanks, S.	Wood, C.
Dundas, Hon. G.	Martin, J.	Waithman, Alderman
Dundas, Hon. T.	Maedonald, Sir J. Bart.	Wood, Alderman
Ebrington, Lord Viscount	Monck, J. B.	Warburton, D.
Euston, Earl of	Morpeth, Lord Viscount	Whitmore, W.
Fergusson, Sir Ronald	Osborne, Lord T.	Wilson, Sir R.
Gordon, R.		

of the Government has not been of a character to cancel past reproach, nor to profit by developed resources.

Upon the accession of William IV. to the crown, and while the Tories were yet in power, his Majesty, in his first speech,—delivered on the 2nd of November, 1830—expressed himself in the following terms:—"I place without reserve at your disposal my interest in the hereditary revenues, and in those funds which may be derived from any droits of the Crown or Admiralty, from the West India duties, or from any casual revenues either in my foreign possessions, or in the United Kingdom."

This surrender of all the Crown revenues to the public service deserves special notice, and pointedly so at the present time; for although Lord Althorp declared that he always considered the concession to include the revenues of the Duchies of Cornwall and Lancaster, yet subsequent proceedings negatived that interpretation, and the same remained, and still are in the possession of the Crown. Having succeeded, as before stated, in getting the returns for which I had previously moved printed by order of the House, I lost no time after the meeting of Parliament in February, 1831, in again reverting to the subject; but the House and the country were so entirely occupied with the Reform Bill, and the dissolution of Parliament consequent upon its first defeat, that many months elapsed before I could reasonably hope to recal attention to the subject. Early, however, in the session of 1833, I gave notice of my intention to move for a Select Committee, when I was anticipated by an unexpected announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Lord Althorpe) that the Government intended taking that step, and thus superseded my motion, which stood for the 16th of May. As the taking the inquiry out of my hands suggested reasonable apprehension as to the course the Government might pursue, I particularly inquired whether the object of the inquiry proposed by the Chief Commissioner of Woods and Forests was concurrent with my own, which was to empower the Commissioners to

enter into the whole question of management and disposal of the Crown Lands, with a view to their application to public purposes, when Lord Duncannon replied such would be the objects of inquiry. The Committee was nominated by the Government, and, as I apprehended, its complexion decided its policy. With a view to the easier access to papers, the Committee was empowered to sit at Whitehall, where I attended five or six times. Upon these occasions certain dealings with the Crown Lands in Carlton House Gardens and elsewhere were investigated, and which were of a character to elicit from the entire Committee a strong expression of disapproval, which it was proposed should be signified in a resolution to the effect that such dealings were "irregular," when I moved as an amendment that the word "censurable" should be substituted, which was negatived by a majority of five to three. As I conceived, the future course of the Committee was decidedly indicated by this vote, confirmatory, too, as it was of my first impression, I declared my indifference to their future proceedings; and with the exception of a journey I took in company with the Chairman and another Member (Mr. Lambert) of the Committee to Reading, to inquire into the disposal of a Crown estate in that neighbourhood, to which our attention was had been drawn by the Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter)—at whose seat we were hospitably received—I ceased to attend at Whitehall.

After the lapse of many years the subject is again referred to a Committee, which is now sitting, and I trust the Noble Chairman will allow me to call his attention to my labours in the same cause. As I have before said, a full description of all the estates belonging to the Crown, which still remain to the nation after a course of merciless pillage, will be found in the Return printed in February, 1831; and especially would I direct the attention of the Committee to the important fact that with a very trivial exception the entire property was emancipated from inadequate rents and prejudicial covenants from and after the year 1836. The country

now will expect an exact and detailed account of the terms upon which every portion of the property so described has been disposed of, when, how, and to whom, as also of the application of the proceeds, and a business-like estimate of the probable value of the property that remains, with suggestions for its judicious alienation. It will not escape the consideration of the Committee, that to the sale of the property will follow the extinction of a very costly establishment.

I cannot conceal the expression of my satisfaction at finding—and I trust my agricultural friends in Essex, who I have so frequently addressed upon the subject, will share my pleasure,—that Financial Reform is taken up by those men whose free trade measures have rendered economy a paramount obligation. Upon the discussion of the Corn Laws I was abused for the opinions I then expressed, especially in the last speech I delivered upon the subject (18th November, 1839) because I dared to ask: “In what way can any person fancy we can struggle successfully against the rival efforts which are now making by the young life and blood of the States which are coming promptly and hourly into full vigour unless we apply ourselves to the state of our taxation?—and that it was a delusion, it was fostering injurious and pernicious expectations, to suppose that free trade in corn would enable us to compete with countries who are eager to run the race of competition with us, while there is such an enormous and frightful inequality in our financial relations.”

I implore the Tenant Farmers to think of these things, and instead of looking for relief to their landlords, who are deluding them with the cry of “Protection,” to come forward and demand economy in every department, and a more equitable distribution of inevitable burdens.

The Tenant Farmers will never rightly appreciate their own pretensions until they divest themselves of their feudal dependence upon the lords of the soil. It should be their object to secure, at

least in some degree, that which at present they in no degree possess, but of which the landlords have far too much—direct Parliamentary representation. It has been through the agency of this power that the landlords have been able, under the extremest pressure of taxation, to profit by it,—at the same time they have contrived, with their accustomed sagacity, to inoculate their tenantry with the notion of identical interests, and that the prosperity of the farmer is to be found in high rents. I endeavoured to combat these sinister views when I addressed the House on Mr. Villiers' motion in 1839. Upon that occasion I observed “that, so far from the landlords being taxed more than any other class of the community, they are not only exempted in effect from all taxation, but are positively benefited by it; that I should like to see an account prepared, showing what it is that the aristocracy, or great landlords, actually pay in direct taxation, and what they actually receive. When I consider how many honourable members of this House are in the Navy, in the Army, how many in possession of civil appointments,—in short, when we take a walk through all our great establishments—when we look at the list of clerks in the financial departments, in the Custom House, in the Excise, in the Stamp Office, in our Colonial and Diplomatic departments, it will be found that those immediately connected with the land, and who it is pretended are entitled to exemption from taxation on account of the heavy burdens imposed upon their property, are receiving back a great deal more than they actually pay towards the finances of the country.”

Let not the Tenant Farmers deceive themselves, as most assuredly they will do, and are doing, when they join in the cry for “Protection.” Their security is alone to be found in rigid economy and mitigated burdens; by which I do not mean the burden of taxation merely—heavy and unequal as it is—but the burden of war rents, war tithes, and the unequal distribution of poor-rates, highway-rates, and a catalogue of county assess-

ments. Not more certain is the rising of the sun than is the setting of the Tenant Farmers, if they do not bestir themselves, and join the economical league. Men of capital, holding large farms for short terms, will be able to outride the storm, but farmers with limited means, hampered with long terms, and stringent covenants, and poor soils, must be swept away before the torrent of free trade unless they are emancipated from their difficulties. Where is his Grace of Richmond?—where is the facetious head of the Essex Decemvirs, that they are not bringing in a bill to absolve tenants from their ruinous engagements? In the debate before mentioned, I pointedly and strenuously pressed this consideration. “There is,” I observed, “a class of persons to which the solicitude of the House ought to be directed—the tenants under covenants. What would be their condition if a system of free trade were instantaneously resorted to? Is the House prepared coincidentally with the adoption of free trade to pass a law by which this class of tenants shall be emancipated from the stipulations of their covenants? I will not attempt, as some have done, to soothe the landed interest with an assurance that free trade will not affect them. It must affect them deeply,—and so it ought. They have had a long run of advantages, and the time is at hand when they must be prepared to forego a considerable portion of those advantages. But as regards the tenants, they are not free agents; for on all occasions the number of applications for farms has far outrun the number of farms to be had; and from the competition for land thus existing high rents are given, and the landlords reap the benefit. Therefore I do not hesitate to say that, under these circumstances, and taking into consideration the covenants under which many tenants hold their farms, to bring about a system of free trade all at once, and without providing for such cases, is a system to which I am not prepared to be a party. Nor do the observations I am making apply less to tenants at will; because, when we consider that a

farmer has generally embarked his all in the soil, and the various implements of industry, what do you fancy would be the value of his cultivation, and of the manure he has thrown in to the land, if he were instantly to be exposed to the free trade system?"

Events are confirming the justice of these remarks, which, as may be supposed, were at the time most unpalatable to all parties, and offer a ready solution of the eagerness with which the Government and the Opposition supplied the clause for disqualifying the Commissioner of City Police for a seat in Parliament. The same dislike of plain speaking excluded my name from the Pension List Committee, and upon another occasion induced the Whigs to take the inquiry into Crown Lands from my hands into their own—a course of conduct which will surprise no one acquainted with the workings of faction, and who attentively reads the speech now published.

SUMMARY OF THE CALCULATIONS REFERRED TO IN MR. HARVEY'S SPEECH.

VALUE OF CROWN PROPERTY.

	£	s.	d.
130 Manors and Royalties, at £1,000	130,000	0	0
Annual Rental of Estates, £600,000, at Twenty-five Years' Purchase	15,000,000	0	0
Middlesex.—Ground Rents, £50,000 per An- num, at Forty Years' Purchase	2,000,000	0	0
Rent from Houses, say £20,000 per Annum, at Eighteen Years' Purchase	360,000	0	0
Waste Lands in Forests, not fit for Oak Tim- ber, 86,000 Acres, at £5 per Acre	430,000	0	0
Church Livings, say	100,000	0	0
Fee Farm Rents, and other Unimprovable An- nual Payments in England and Wales, at least £6,000, at Twenty-five Years' Pur- chase	150,000	0	0
Allotments under 485 Inclosure Acts, £500 each	242,500	0	0
Irish Estates	2,000,000	0	0
	£20,412,500	0	0

The above estimate is exclusive of Mines of Coal, and Tin, and Copper, and Royal Domains; also of Duchy of Lancaster, £30,000 a year. Davenant, in his "Treatise on the Lands of England," estimates the common rights of the Crown at 300,000 acres.

SPEECH, &c.

In rising, sir, to redeem the pledge which I gave to this House in the last session of Parliament, that I would bring under its review and consideration the present state and management of that important part of our public revenues which are commonly designated by the name of the Crown Lands, I shall not, at the outset, waste the time of this House, or my own strength, in the expression of unavailing regret, than which none can more deeply feel than I do, that this subject has not fallen under the charge of some one capable of imparting to so dry a subject the graces of language, and the charms of classical elocution. The subject is unfortunately bereft of these attractions in my hands; but I think the time has at length arrived when inquiry is called for, and with the firm and honest purpose of serving the country, I am prepared to encounter the difficulties which beset me, for I have no pretensions to eloquence; I have no promise of aid from power, from party, or from faction; I go forward, because I am impressed with a deep sense of its being my duty to do so, as an independent representative of the people; in which capacity I bring before the House the present state of the Crown Lands, and to show them to be a most important source of public revenue, hitherto much and grossly neglected, and only requiring prudent and judicious control and management to be rendered capable of administering largely to the national relief. However clogged this subject necessarily is by dry details, it has at least the peculiar advantage of novelty; for although we have had abundance of parliamentary committees and royal commissions, upon all kinds of subjects touching our foreign and domestic, our military, naval, and commercial policy, nothing has been done in the way of general inquiry respecting these Crown Lands, except an examination under a commission as far back as the year 1786, since the accession of Queen Anne, in 1702. Let it not, then, be said, that we are going over ground which has been often and tediously explored, and rendered revolting by repetition. This is not, I say, the case, for the journey is quite new to all of us; nor do I regret that I have frequently postponed this subject; for I think I can discover some glimmering traces of anxiety in the minds of Ministers, if not to reform themselves, at least not to check the views of reform in others—if not to be the pioneers of reform, yet they are not disposed to throw serious

obstacles in its progress. I am not disposed to prejudice the temper, nor to question the sincerity of their intentions, when I recollect the substantial proofs they have recently given of a desire to mitigate the public burdens. I am also glad that I have not brought this subject forward earlier; because, had I done so before the Right Hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Huskisson) spoke, on a former night, I should have lost the advantage of his able testimony to the utility of an inquiry, and of the declaration, that by a judicious and wise system of management the Crown Lands would be found a great auxiliary to the financial resources of the country. Such an admission, from a minister who had himself so long presided over this particular department, is highly important. I am aware, sir, that I have undertaken a weighty task, and, in acquitting myself of it, I shall confine myself to the evidence of facts. It would be very convenient to this House were gentlemen always to pursue this course: and I have often wished that it was one of our standing orders that every hon. member should be compelled to state distinctly the principal object of his motion, and the principles he proposes to advocate or to challenge. But as this is not the case, we are often obliged to attend to long and unconnected speeches, to grapple with dubious propositions, and to seize the real object of debate just as we may chance to discover it. When speaking of the Crown Lands, I am speaking upon a subject upon which little is known, and I greatly doubt whether the noble Lord (Lowther) who I see object, and who, as Chief Commissioner, presides over the department of the Woods and Forests, really knows the extent or locality, still less the value, of the various and important possessions of which he is the constituted guardian. My object, therefore, is, to possess this information; which can only be satisfactorily obtained by the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the state and management of the Crown Lands. It is not saying too much, at this hour, to declare that no man has the least idea of the value of this extensive property; by some its annual revenue is estimated at £500,000; by others at only £50,000. There are some who say that, if sold, it would yield £500,000; others say £5,000,000. Is this the condition in which a matter of such grave importance should be allowed to remain, in utter ignorance of its management or its capabilities? Whence, then, I ask, such entire ignorance of the value of public property of such great and important extent? I can only account for it from the name which it bears. Crown property has been hitherto held to be a sacred fund, the very designation of which interdicted public inquiry. Now, is it not fit the public should be informed that there is no branch of the public revenue so entirely unconnected with the Crown as the one into which I call for inquiry—it has nothing to do with the king's direct revenues—and yet there is no property so improvidently bought, so wastefully sold, or so scandalously underlet? I will state the origin of this property, and of what it consists, as far as the matter is at present intelligible; next, how it appears to have fluctuated at

different periods, in remote and recent times ; and, finally, what is its present apparent condition and situation, and how I think it ought to be dealt with. I will show, sir, how it is managed—or rather mismanaged ; how it has been sold for slight considerations, or for no considerations at all ; how it has been let for trifling rents ; how purchases have been improvidently made, and re-sales permitted at a great depreciation from the first cost ; and I ask if any hon. gentleman would allow his private property to be placed in this uncertain and fluctuating state ? And are we, who are trustees of the public, to permit this property to remain in a state so inefficient and unproductive, and more particularly at a time when the public exigencies imperiously demand the utmost attention to economy ? As trustees, therefore, for the people of England, I call upon you to interfere, and render this property, over which you have absolute control, more available and more valuable than it has hitherto been.

With respect to the history of this property, it is well known that in distant times every monarch in Europe had for the maintenance of his personal splendour, the gaieties of his court, and for the security of his dominions from external or internal disturbance, certain means exclusively drawn from the soil. This was the case all over Europe. When that illegitimate child of fortune, William of Normandy, descended from neighbouring shores, and overcame the legitimate Harold, he dispossessed the latter of a landed income which realised £400,000. The land was the exclusive source from whence the monarch maintained his state and defended his country. If we carry our recollection back still farther, we shall find that the entire burdens of the country fell upon its territory ; for not only was the land made to yield revenue for the personal support of the Crown, but to support the wars of the monarch ; and, in addition, those who held of the king *in capite* were compelled to provide and support 60,000 men, when called upon, for purposes of war or display. In those days of chivalrous feeling no one ventured to strip the Crown of its just prerogatives ; but when, in future reigns, self interest asserted its pretensions, large territorial sessions were made by the Crown ; so that we find in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries that a revenue of £400,000 a year, was gradually reduced, by repeated concessions, to such an extent that in the reigns of Henry IV., Edward II., and Richard II., it had dwindled down to £57,000, and in the time of Henry VI. all that remained was an annual revenue of £5,051. It was reserved, however, for our great defender of the faith, and of pluralities in churches and wives, to add most largely to the Crown property. He proceeded on a large scale, considering his peculiar piety and love for the Church ; for he appropriated no less than £273,000 worth of annual property to secular purposes, from the ecclesiastical and monastic institutions. Sir John Sinclair, a cautious and careful writer, observes that the property which Henry had thus appropriated to himself, would be equal to £6,000,000 a year of our

modern currency. It frequently happens that men of grasping minds are generous; and Henry freely distributed much of this Church property among the nobles and gentry of his court, the descendants of several of whom hold it to this day. Whether any hon. member who hears me, possessing a share of this property, is ready to redress his ancestors from the charge of spoliation is more than I shall predict; but it is a matter of history that Henry VIII., on the occasion to which I allude, appropriated to himself and his minions two thousand religious houses, monasteries, chapelries, and edifices of varied piety.

It appears, by a return which is to be found in the Augmentation Office, that in the year 1555 (Queen Mary's reign) the land revenue of the Crown applicable to the service of the State had been so frittered and wasted away that the original property of the Crown—estimated, as I have stated, in the time of William the Conqueror at £400,000 a year, and largely augmented during the reign of Henry VIII.—produced only £86,680. I wish the noble lord opposite (Lord Lowther) to understand that all the statements which I make, either of figures or facts, are derived from documents which are alike accessible to him as to myself. I think it right to assure the noble lord of this circumstance, as he might otherwise be disposed to infer that some of the statements which I shall have to make to the House are exaggerated or unfounded. Let it, therefore, be clearly understood that I shall advance nothing in the course of my address to the House for which I have not the best authority. But to resume. By the copy of a return made in the reign of Queen Mary it appears that the annual revenue arising from the Crown lands in the various counties of England amounted to £86,680. Owing to the lapse of leases and other favourable events the annual return of revenue for these lands appears to have been improved in the reign of Elizabeth to the sum of £132,000.

I hold in my hand the copy of a return which is to be found in the Augmentation Office, and which was made in the forty-fourth year of the reign of Elizabeth, by which it appears (and this is a circumstance well worthy the attention of the present Parliament) that that pre-eminent princess, while she was able to wield the power of this country so successfully in the maintenance of her dignity and in the resistance of external aggression, was also enabled to maintain the whole of her establishments, civil and military, for a sum of £502,231. The entire revenue of that successful queen at the time to which I am alluding amounted to a sum very little exceeding half a million of money, of which £132,000 were derived from what remained of the Crown Lands. It was reserved, however, for the Napoleon of the seventeenth century to estimate more usefully the property of the Crown in England. Cromwell, at the earliest opportunity, instituted an inquiry into the nature and extent of the royal revenues derived from land, with the intention of making them really productive. For this purpose he appointed commissioners,

who travelled through the entire country for the purpose of ascertaining the extent and availability of the Crown Lands. But, assailed as his government was by jealousies at home, and by enemies abroad, it may easily be supposed that he was unable to make this property so productive as he might have done in more tranquil times. Yet it appears, by documents which are open to the inspection of the noble lord at the head of this department, that a return was made to the Treasury of Cromwell of Crown Lands, at that time consisting of 679 bailiwicks and 770 distinct manors and farms. Of this property Cromwell disposed of as much as brought into the coffers of the State £2,000,000 sterling.

In the county of Cornwall only there appears to have been at that time fifty-two important estates, of which only three now remain; and here I would beg leave to call the attention of the noble lord, who has so frequently unfolded the advantages of Parliamentary Reform, and who, I believe, has it in contemplation to bring the subject of Reform again before the House, to a return which was made by the Commissioners appointed by Cromwell. It appears by this return, that of the fifty-two houses, manors, and estates in the county of Cornwall, five distinct boroughs were sold by the Protector. These consisted of the boroughs of Launceston, Fowey, Liskeard, Lestwithiel, and Saltash. Now, I should apprehend that there would be no difficulty in ascertaining what the Republican gave for these boroughs, or what the Royalist would at present re-sell them for.

Upon the restoration of Charles II. the property which had been alienated by Cromwell was declared void; but there were too many of those who knew well how to seize the precise period when they could be converted from republicanism to royalty, to sanction the absolute resumption of those estates. Charles, therefore, was content to seize those lands which belonged to parties who were too deeply committed to the Commonwealth to remain in the country after the restoration, and who, leaving their estates behind them, quitted their country to seek safety in another. A period having been allowed, and a time fixed for an inquiry into all these delicate matters, it appeared by the report of the Commissioners appointed by Charles that the annual amount of the revenue in Crown Lands, which had survived the shock of the revolution, was £217,900. But neither Charles II. nor James II. were able to withstand the ceaseless demands that were made upon them by those who estimated their loyalty by the price at which concession was made; and it happened that nearly all those estates which survived the Commonwealth were leased out to great families by one or other of these kings for very long terms at nearly nominal rents. The greatest assaults, however, that were made upon the revenues of the Crown proceeded from the boastful friends of freedom, who appear to have defined their attachment to the revolution by the terms at which they would devote themselves to William III. It appears that nearly the whole of the Crown revenue was conceded compulsorily by that monarch to his patriot

followers—not by absolute alienations, but by leases for long terms (nearly a century), for little more than nominal rents. Upon the accession of Queen Anne the Civil List clothed this property with a public character and form; it is, therefore, from this time that I am most anxious to direct the attention of the House to the subject. I am afraid, indeed, that from an anxiety to avoid the tedium of narrative in bringing the subject down from remote times, I have rendered my statement more confused than concise. However, I shall proceed. In the reign of Queen Anne, a compact was first entered into between the Queen and the people, by which a Civil List amounting to nearly £600,000 a year was given in commutation for the land revenue which the Sovereign at that time exclusively enjoyed. The preamble to the act which granted this Civil List of £600,000 is very remarkable, for it expressly states that “it is for the purpose of defraying a part of the expenses of the Crown, and lessening the burdens of the people by means of a preservation and improvement of the Crown Lands.” That is the preamble of the bill which formed the basis of the first Civil List, and it has continued the same to the present day in principle, though augmented in amount. By that bill the people became possessed of a legal title for all future times to what is commonly called Crown Lands.

At that time the Crown Lands were subjected to a new system of management, and it was provided that no lands should be let for a longer time than thirty-one years, and no lease of a house granted for more than fifty years; that the reserved rent should be one-third of the yearly value. Although these regulations were made, yet no steps seem to have been taken to carry them into effect; and it is a fact that the greater number of the estates, of which I have been speaking, were leased out at nominal sums of one mark, or 6s. 8d., 13s. 4d., and £1. So great had the abuses at length become, that they attracted the attention of the House of Commons, and three members—Shippen, Strangeways, and Lockhart—brought in a bill to remedy the misapplication of the produce of the Crown Lands, and to empower the Crown to resume the possession of those which had been improperly alienated. This bill was read a third time on the 29th of March, 1711; but it found its grave in that place where so many other acts of utility have been entombed. From that time no more was heard of the Crown Lands, until the year 1760; but, to show the nature of the management of the lands in the interval, I entreat the attention of the House to the fact, that property which, if fairly let, should have brought one million per annum, produced in 1760 just £482 16s. 7³/₄d. of yearly rent.

At the time that his late Majesty ascended the throne of these realms, no alteration took place in the Civil List or the management of this property, except that the former was augmented; and instead of the clause in the statute of Anne, by which it was provided that every lease should contain a reservation of one-third of the value, a new clause was inserted, by which it was enacted

that one-eighth of the value should be reserved, and that the remaining seven-eighths should be paid in the shape of a fine. And here I will direct the attention of the House to some transactions in reference to this property, which took place between the years 1711 and 1768; by which it will appear, that notwithstanding the provision of the statute of Anne, and the statute of George III., such was the profligate dealing of ministers with this Crown property, that some of the most important portions of it were leased out to influential persons for merely nominal considerations.

So obvious, indeed, is it, that the object was to afford pre-eminent advantages to some of the great families of this country, that large quantities of Crown Lands were first let for nothing, and being estimated upon that rent as worth nothing, were finally sold for nothing. That is to say, that property which would be worth £5,000 a year, was let out for 99 years for a sum of £10; and then because that £10 was assumed to be the real value, the property was immediately afterwards sold for £200. I will give the House instances of this; and the House may from these data be able to form a judgment of the general course pursued with respect to the property of the Crown.

From a return to which the noble lord opposite (Lord Lowther) has access, I find that a parcel of Crown Land, lying between Park-lane and Swallow-street, in Piccadilly, was let to the family of the Pulteneys, for one hundred years, at a rent of £12 16s., the yearly value being £2,047, and sold for £500. I believe that the lease is now on the point of expiring. The steps taken with respect to it will become a fit subject of consideration hereafter. This is a specimen of the course pursued both by Whigs and Tories when in power; and, indeed, I think it is difficult to say which of them pillaged the country most; although if I look to the proceedings of 1688 I think the balance is rather against the Whigs. Again, I find that the estate of Bowood, near Chippenham, including the borough of Calne, was first let for £30 a year, and then sold for £468 10s. Furness, in Lancashire, was in the same manner in 1770 let to Sir Thomas Lowther for a trifle, and afterwards sold, &c., in the same way. The manor of Spalding, in Lincolnshire, worth £4,000 a year, was likewise given to the trustees of the Earl of Dalkeith, from whom it passed to the Duke of Buccleuch, at a rent of £5. I wish to notice to the House that I derive this information from the Report of the Commissioners who were appointed in 1786, being a period quite as near to those transactions as we are to the latter time. Now, if it shall appear that the Government of the country has suffered this important information to slumber for forty years, and has thus given a perpetuity to abuse, I think that that is a strong argument in favour of the motion which it is my intention this evening to submit to the House. The Commissioners appointed in the year 1786 distinctly declared that these properties were disposed of without any estimate of their value. I beg, in

saying this, to observe that I do not allude to those transactions which occurred many years before the Commission of 1786 made their Report for the purpose of disturbing the possession of the holders at the present moment. I mention them merely to show that they afford good reason for not allowing the Crown Lands to remain under the management of the Government, if it is proved that they so misused their power, and took no measures to remedy those abuses which were pointed out in the Report of the Commission.

I would now call the attention of the House to the disposal of the manor of Seaton, in the county of York, together with the valuable alum works attached to it, to the Earl of Mulgrave. The sale took place on the 16th of November. 1774; the property having been previously under-let at a rent of £2,696, was sold for £27,000. At the same time, the highly-valuable alum works were sold for £20,000; £14,000 being allowed for a lease which had been granted in the April preceding. Now, what became of the money thus obtained for this property? The Commissioners who sat afterwards, in the year 1786, sent a letter to Mr. Peter Burrell, requiring to know what had been done with the money; and he replied that, to the best of his belief, it had been paid by his father to Sir Grey Cooper, the Secretary of the Treasury. It is certain, however, that the slight consideration paid by the Earl of Mulgrave for this valuable property never found its way into the public treasury. I should not have thought it necessary to have mentioned this case, except to convince those hon. members who are connected with this species of property that they are not altogether free from inquiry. In the rebellion of 1715 the estates of the Earl of Derwentwater were forfeited to the Crown. They were of the annual value of £9,000; and some influential persons who at that time, as now, were about the office of Woods and Forests, being anxious to become possessed of them, the Commissioners managed to get the whole property sold for £1,000 to one of their parliamentary friends. This transaction, however, was too gross to escape; and an inquiry having been instituted by the House of Commons, two of the members were expelled this House, and two others who had participated in the transaction were severely reprimanded. I notice this transaction because I think it well that the House, so fond of precedents, should bear in mind that such things were done formerly, and that such were the consequences.

I have stated that one of the provisions of the statute of George III. was, that one-eighth of the entire rentals should be reserved as rent, and that the remaining seven-eighths should be taken in the shape of a fine. Now, let us see how far this statute was carried into effect. It appears by the Report of the Commissioners appointed in 1786, that of the one-eighth of the rent reserved, which should have amounted to £13,662, and which, multiplied by seven, would amount to £95,634—being the

amount which should have been paid by way of fines—the sum actually received by way of fines was only £7,078 ; that is to say, very little more than one-half of the eighth to be received as rent, or one-sixteenth of the whole. Up to the present time, indeed, we do not seem to have profited much by the arrangement made on the accession of the third George. In 1770 the manor of Newark was let to Henry Duke of Newcastle, at a rent of £482, the fine being £3,374 ; but the fine actually paid was only £200 ; and the Commissioners, when they alluded to the subject, emphatically declared the abuses to be enormous. To avoid fatiguing the House by travelling into what might be considered extraneous branches of the subject, there are many things which I have studiously avoided, and among them is the revenue derived from the Crown Lands in Wales. I state this, because no one, presuming on my silence upon the subject, should rise and say that there was a great deal of redeeming virtue in the principal. I will leave the House to judge of the nature and extent of this redeeming principle in the management of Crown Lands in Wales, when I state that from the year 1760 to 1786, the rent received in Wales was £125,125, of which £124,466 were paid for management ; leaving the balance, £659, to be paid into the coffers of the State. The estimated annual value of the Crown Lands in England at the time of the accession of George III. was £78,049, but it appears that the actual sum received, from 1760 to 1786, when the commission of inquiry was established, comprehending a period of twenty-six years, and, including all that was paid, both for rents and fines, amounted only to £11,575 a year. It appears, therefore, that while the real value of the Crown Lands at the accession of the late king were estimated at the value of £78,049 a year, the total annual receipt for rents and fines amounted only to £11,575, being a loss from this management of £66,474 a year to the country ; or, during twenty-six years, a total loss of £1,728,324 ; which must have gone somewhere, but which never found its way to the public treasury.

I shall only briefly notice the Woods and Forests. I feel that if I were to submit any proposal in relation to that property, I should have to encounter a host of national prejudices touching the support of our navy. Well aware of this, it is not my intention to propose any measure in regard to this property ; and the statements which I shall have to offer to the notice of the House are only adduced by me to show the general mismanagement which has taken place with regard to all the Crown property. Certainly, if I were asked what is my opinion as to the manner in which those nurseries of timber for our navy should be disposed of, I would say that the property ought to be placed under the superintendence of the Navy Board ; and if it should be found that the gentlemen at that public department have their hands too full of business already, an opportunity would be afforded to the Government for creating two additional offices ; and in that way the two young gentlemen who were deprived of their emoluments by a vote of this House the other evening, might be provided for.

The Commissioners appointed in 1786 to inquire into the state of the Woods and Forests, having minutely and faithfully fulfilled their duty, they made a report, embracing in its details every forest in the kingdom ; but with regard to the farms and manors of the Crown they made no such inquiry. It appears that they conceived that by the terms of their appointment their inquiry was to be directed exclusively to the woods and forests, and that with regard to the farms and manors of the Crown they conceived they had not been appointed to enter into a minute and personal inspection. They expose a number of abuses which pervade the management of the woods and forests ; and, speaking of this property, they state that it would be idle to attempt a reform of those abuses while the officers to whom was entrusted the management of these forests, derived advantages from their continuance. It is, indeed, impossible to read the seventeen reports made by these Commissioners without being struck with the integrity with which they conducted this inquiry, and the fearless manner in which they record their opinions in reference to various abuses. These Commissioners observe, that so deplorable and prodigal was the management of the woods and forests, that from the year 1761 till 1786, the entire produce of them did not suffice to pay for their management, but that the balance was defrayed out of the general funds of the land revenue of the Crown, and that over and above what had accrued from the sale of timber there had been expended upon the superintendence and management of the woods and forests during that period the sum of £144,882. They then go on to say that it appeared that all remonstrances on the subject were unavailing.

LORD LOWTHER : Who were the Commissioners ?

MR. HARVEY : The noble Lord asks who were these Commissioners. The Commissioners were Mr. Middleton, Mr. Houldsworth, and Mr. Call, and subsequently Mr. Alexander Fordyce. They say that remonstrances had been vain ; and they mention an instance of the neglect which existed in the management of this property, and it is a curious one. It appeared that a distinguished individual held property under the Crown, with a right of pasturage for one horse, in Woolmer Forest ; and it appeared that for many years, for the pasturage of this single animal, forest land belonging to the Crown to the extent of 460 acres was appropriated. They gave an instance of two forests in the county of Southampton—Alice Holt Forest and Woolmer Forest—where the costs of the management far exceeded the receipts ; for while the receipts in one year amounted to £15,410, the charge for the management, &c., of this estate, was £24,084, being an expenditure of nearly £9,000 over and above the value of the entire produce of this property. They instance another forest—the Forest of Whittlewood, of 5,424 acres, the average profits of which to the Crown amounted to £85 per annum, while the expenditure upon its management was £145 a year.

In their ninth report they speak of an estate called Bennefield

Lawn, and they call the attention of the Government to the circumstances connected with this estate. It appears that it contains 394 acres of land, which they say belong to the Crown, but which, it seems, had been usurped by parties who had no right to the property. They suggest, in reference to this property, that an inquiry should be instituted and proceedings taken to establish the right of the Crown to the possession of it; still no proceedings had been instituted for this purpose. They mention another portion of Crown property, which had been seized by other parties, in the Forest of Rockingham, and by Lord Westmoreland amongst the rest, and which amounted to 3,000 acres of the finest land in England. This property had been usurped by these parties so far back as the first year of the reign of Queen Anne; and when an inquiry was afterwards instituted with regard to it, the other parties having conceded their portions to Lord Westmoreland, this property was transferred to his lordship by the Crown for less than 1s. 4d. per acre. The Commissioners state, in page 546 of their Report, that notwithstanding every effort was made to induce Lord Westmoreland to give an account of this property, he refused to do so, and that he declined to answer any inquiry upon the subject. The Commissioners proceed to speak of Sherwood Forest. They say that it comprised upwards of 95,000 acres; and owing to the mismanagement and want of attention to the interests of the Crown, from the year 1760 to the year 1786 the disbursements for the management of this immense extent of land exceeded the receipts by the sum of £9,037.

The Commissioners give another example of the prodigality and want of proper attention which had been displayed in the superintendence of the Crown property. They observe that they had inspected the accounts with respect to Brecon Forest and the number of trees that had been blown down and sold there for several years; and that it appeared from the accounts of the sale that the trees sold during a period of thirty years, although their value was estimated at £2,474, produced only £850, the rest having been expended in fees to officers and in the charges of collection; and they state that, upon turning to the books in which the entry of the sale was made, they found that, though the trees sold for £850, that sum was written off "even," because the expenses of the sale just equalled the amount which the sale produced. The Commissioners mention also an instance of an act of generosity of the Crown towards the Duke of Newcastle, which appears to have been extended in other instances to his noble descendant. In Birkenhead Wood a broad riding way was cut through the forest for his grace; the timber which was cut down produced £15,000, and was given to the noble duke, but the expense of putting up the necessary paling, amounting to £118, was charged to the Government. These Commissioners, as I have stated, were appointed in 1786, and their primary object appeared to be to inquire into the state of the woods and forests; but, in order to obtain returns of the description, and the then present con-

dition and available value of all the Crown estates, with a view to ascertain the amount of the actual rental arising from the Crown property throughout the country, they caused a circular letter to be sent for that purpose to all the receivers of Crown rents throughout the kingdom, and these returns they accordingly obtained. I now hold them in my hand, and I will state the result of them. It appears from these returns, made by the receivers connected with the various estates in the kingdom to the Commissioners, that they estimated the revenue available to the Crown from all these estates, exclusive of the woods and forests, and of the mines and some other properties of an uncertain value, in 1786, at £102,626; that was the value which their returns set upon this description of Crown property at that period, and which property is spread over forty out of the fifty-two English counties. That was the return of the receivers as to the value of the Crown estates in 1786; but the Commissioners, being anxious to ascertain whether that was the real value of them, determined, though they did not consider themselves obliged so to do by the terms of their appointment, which applied more especially to the woods and forests, to make personal inquiry and inspection of these estates, to ascertain whether the returns gave the real value of them. They accordingly had an actual survey made, indiscriminately, of ten important estates. The properties which they had thus surveyed for this purpose were situated in the counties of Lancaster, Essex, Lincoln, Worcester, Nottingham, and Wilts. The value of these estates was estimated by the receivers of the rents, in 1786, in their returns, at £3,242; but upon the actual survey being made, by order of the Commissioners, their value was estimated by the surveyors at £8,394. Now, looking at this fact, I conceive that we have a right to take for granted that as in the case of ten states indiscriminately chosen, the real value of them was found to be three times greater than the estimate of the receivers, if a similar survey were made in regard to all those estates, which were estimated altogether at only £102,629, it would be found that a similar disproportion existed between that estimate and their real value, and that their real value amounted to treble that sum, or to £300,000. My opinion is, looking at the facts stated by the Commissioners, that such was the value of these Crown estates in 1786. These returns of the Commissioners form the basis upon which I have calculated the real value of the revenues available to the Crown—or, more correctly speaking, to the public—arising from these lands; and I think I am fully borne out by those returns in assuming that the real value of these estates in 1786, instead of being £102,626, should have been stated at treble that amount, or £300,000. I assume this as the standard of the real value of this property, and which, of course, has greatly increased in value since that time. In concluding their report, the Commissioners, after giving a minute statement of the forests, advert to a proposition which was at that period very generally discussed—namely, the expediency of selling these Crown estates;

and, after balancing the arguments upon that point, they state it as their opinion that it would be imprudent to do so then; and their reason for coming to that conclusion is, that the principal estates of the Crown were let out on leases of long unexpired terms, and at low rents, and it was not likely that, upon a sale of them, they would, under such circumstances, yield their real value. They say that, if the leases were nearly expiring, and that these Crown estates could be disposed of profitably and to advantage, they should not hesitate to recommend the sale of them, and they quote a passage from Adam Smith which recommends the sale of these Crown lands. The Commissioners say that that was not the proper time for selling these estates, as they were encumbered with unexpired terms and at nominal rents, but that whenever the leases were near expiring, that would be the fittest time for the sale of this property, and that, in the meantime, no renewals of the leases, as they expired, should be made. These long leases, which the Commissioners speak of in 1786, have now almost all expired, and therefore I contend this is the fittest period, in reference to the condition of this property, that could possibly be selected for the sale of it.

From the returns of the receivers, to which I have already referred, it appears that these Crown estates were valued in 1786 at £102,626. Between 1790 and 1802 Crown property to the amount of £11,235 became free of lease. If, therefore, the recommendation of the Commissioners was attended to, and no new leases were granted during that period, Crown property has become emancipated and fit for disposal. Between 1802 and 1816 it appears that Crown property to the amount of £54,952 has fallen out of lease; and the leases of another portion of Crown property to the amount of £31,426 expired between 1816 and 1830. Therefore in 1830, of all the property, the leases of which were in existence in 1786, there remained only £14,400, the leases of which have to run till the year 1836. It appears, then, that in 1836 the whole of this property will be out of lease, will be perfectly free and unincumbered, and not an acre of it will remain under the leases which existed in 1786, with the exception of £24 13s. 4d., the lease of which will not expire until the year 2771—a period too distant, and in amount too small, to wait for its arrival.

Having now brought my statement down to this period, I am anxious to approach the practical part of the subject, and shall proceed to advert to the manner in which Crown property has been latterly disposed of. I beg to call the attention of the noble lord opposite to this part of the subject. I can assure him that in adverting to it I by no means wish to cast any imputations upon the noble lord on account of these transactions; and if I shall refrain at present from praising the conduct of the noble lord, it is because I do not wish to make any individious distinction between him and his predecessors. I shall call the attention of the House to the manner in which several houses in Piccadilly have been let.

Every hon. member is aware of the value of property in that quarter.

By referring to the returns which have been triennially made to the House, it will be found that several houses in Piccadilly have been let for £30, £50, and £70 a year, the value of which any individual acquainted with them would estimate at five or six times that amount. I beg also to call the attention of the House to the very inadequate and delusive description given in these triennial returns of this species of property. I will take any one of the items, and ask whether it gives anything like any idea of the property to which it refers? Let any hon. member take up one of these items, and say whether from it he can form any notion whatever of the value or the description of the property which it is meant to designate. Take for instance the following:—"The manor of Epsworth, with Westwood and Haxey, and divers lands and tenements in Epsworth, Belton, Ouston, and Haxey." It is manifestly impossible for any one who should cast his eye upon this entry, and who might wish to bid for this property, to form any idea of it, so as to declare whether it is worth £5 or £50, £500 or £5,000. Such a practice places in the hands of the Government an extraordinary and unconstitutional power; for I will assert that the lands under the superintendence of the Woods and Forests are quite sufficient, if perverted, to corrupt both Houses of Parliament. I mean to cast no imputation upon the noble lord or his predecessors, but I assert they ought not possess this power. That this property has been disposed of with a view to political purposes and for political corruption in some instances cannot be denied; for it appears, from a return given in the report of 1786, that property to the amount of £997 a year had been let to Sir Samson Gideon for £30 a year. Similar grants may have been made to other hon. members on different occasions. This, therefore, is a class of power which ought not to be lodged anywhere; and without meaning to cast any imputation upon the noble lord or his predecessors, I will say that this property in its present shape presents a source of corruption sufficient to contaminate any Parliament and pervert its members to any purpose.

I shall now refer the House to the property of the Crown in the manor of Newark. I desire to call the attention of the noble lord opposite to this point, the rather because I considered him, in the discussion which the hon. member for Dover a short time since introduced upon this matter, to estimate this property much below its real value. I understood the noble lord upon that occasion to say that the estimate which I then gave of this property was far above its real value. I do not mean to state that the noble lord upon that occasion meant to depreciate its real value; but the statement which he then made will enable the House to judge of the correctness of the information possessed at head quarters in reference to the real value of Crown property in general. I would refer to the description given of this property, and ask any hon. member whether it affords him any means of

judging of its nature, amount, or real value? It is described as the "Royal Manor of Newark, with the messuages and lands appertaining thereto." If any hon. member should go into the Auction Mart, and find a property put up for sale with such a description, how could he possibly form any judgment as to its amount or value, so as to enable him to bid for it? This description affords no guide whatever to its value or amount. What is the way in which this property has been dealt with? In 1730 a lease was granted for thirty-one years, at the annual rent of £144, to the prime minister of that day. Since that time Newark has increased considerably in wealth and importance; and the value of the property there must be greatly enhanced. Newark is in the centre of the kingdom, with all the great roads running near it—it is in the centre of a great manufacturing district; and it is, therefore, but reasonable to conclude that since 1730 it has advanced considerably in wealth and importance. There were 900 acres of land, with fifty houses, and it was let in 1730 to the then Duke of Newcastle for £144 per annum. The lease has since been renewed to the descendant of that noble duke for £2,000 per annum. Now I am informed that the value of this property is equal to £200,000.

I hold in my hand, sir, an estimate which has been made of this property by a professional gentleman of eminence in the town of Newark; and he states that if it were set up for free competition at a public sale, it would fetch £200,000 at the least. Reference has been made to the low amount of the rents at which the Duke of Newcastle has let this property; but that, it is obvious, has been done by the noble duke for political purposes, and it affords no guide to enable us to ascertain its real value. This gentleman states, that if it were now offered fairly and freely for sale, the inhabitants would be most willing and anxious to bid for it, and to the amount which I have just mentioned. The present rental of the Duke of Newcastle is £4,000 a year; but this gentleman states that if the property were let without reference to political purposes, it would bring in £7,000 a year. He also adds that the rental must be more than doubled by the Duke of Newcastle, if he had not let it for electioneering purposes, and with a view to preserve his political influence in the borough.

I shall now advert to the conduct of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests in reference to the sale of the manor of Rosedale, in the county of York; and in doing so, I do not think that I could fasten upon any feature in their conduct which is less deserving of approbation. This property is situated in the mountainous recesses of Yorkshire. The lease of these premises expired in 1816, and since that period the farms have been let to tenants at will. The consequence is, that the roads and farms, which are forty in number, are in a most ruinous condition, and the whole property is greatly prejudiced.

No steps whatever were taken to sell this property, or to let it to advantage, but it was left in that state for fourteen years; and

the result has been that this property was deteriorated five years' purchase at least. I visited this extensive Crown estate, and found it in a most deplorable condition. It was at length determined, at the expiration of these fourteen years, to offer this property for sale, and it was so announced on the 30th of September, in one lot, but no particulars were given to enable any one who might be anxious to purchase it to judge of its value. Indeed, from the account given of it, no human being could tell whether these 5,000 acres, of which it consisted, were woods, or grounds under pasture, or corn. I wrote a letter to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, calling their attention to this circumstance; and though I cannot flatter myself that they would give much attention to any suggestion from me, the result was, that the sale was postponed until a better account and fuller particulars of the premises were made out. But when was the sale attempted? On the 31st of December, when the mountains in Yorkshire were capped with snow, and when no one could possibly have access to visit the estate. It was announced for sale upon that day in the city of York. Having mentioned this property to a friend, he commissioned me to purchase it; and I accordingly sent an individual down to York to bid for it. The mode of sale was most extraordinary. The Government reserved to themselves a concealed bid; and as the bidding proceeded they accommodated their bid in reference to the highest, instead of having it scaled up as is the usual practice on such occasions, and not opened until the last bid has been given. The person whom I employed made the last bid, and he bid £37,000. What was the reserved bid of the Government? It was £70,000.

I do not mean to deal in compliments, but I would rather do so than offend. Without offence, therefore, I hope I may be permitted to say that this was, in my opinion, a very prejudicial course for the public service, for when people found that such a sum as £70,000 was the reserve bid of the Government, and that the actual biddings did not exceed more than 10s. in the pound on that sum, it must prevent them from coming forward with other offers, under the idea that as Government cannot dispose of it at its own price, it must ultimately, if disposed to sell, yield to favourites. I think, sir, that this property ought to have been sold, not as one entirety, but in lots. I will read to the House a letter which I received from forty out of forty-two of the tenants, informing me of their desire to purchase their respective holdings. That desire was very natural on their parts, for it so happens that the tenants of those farms were the owners of the tithes upon their holdings, and consequently the property was more valuable to them than to any other parties.

Property like that of the Crown in Rosedale is never so available when put up to sale as a whole, as it is when put up in distinct parcels. The next property to which I wish to call the attention of the House is that which is known by the name of Sunk Island. Sunk Island is at the mouth of the river Humber,

and was rescued from the sea during the last fifty years. In the year 1786 it was vaguely described as a parcel of sandy land in the river Humber; and, strange to say, it was thus described in a modern return for which I moved last year, though it now produces to the Crown lessee a rental of £10,000 a year. I moved, sir, in the course of last year, for a return of all the Crown property held under leases which would expire within the next seven years, and Sunk Island happened to be included within that property. The modern description of it was as follows:—

“Sunk Island.—A parcel of sandy ground, and lying in the river Humber; a great part of it is to be embanked, and a chapel is to be built thereon.” And then it gives the items of the rent to be paid, and the names of the parties.

Colonel DAVIES: When was the lease granted?

Mr. HARVEY: The lease began in 1802, when the value of land was much higher than at present. This land was first let in 1771, on a thirty years' lease, at a rent of £60 a year, and a fine of £1,550. Its estimated value was then £960 a year; and thus, when the fine ought to have been £8,400, the Crown was content with receiving £1,550. That lease expired in the year 1802. Sunk Island had then been considerably augmented in extent by what is called the warp of the sea. It was in this augmented state let to the Rev. John Lonsdale and his co-partners for thirty-one years, and that lease will expire in 1834. It was let during the first year for a rent of £700; during the second for a rent of £2,000; and during all the rest of the time for a rent of £3,000; and the lessees were to expend the money which might be requisite for the embankment of the soil and for the erection of houses upon it. What, then, was done by the lessees? Individuals residing in the neighbourhood have informed me that the lessees, after the first year of their lease expired, expended £10,000 upon the island, and let it for the next year at no less a sum than £10,000. At the last audit, the Rev. John Lonsdale and his co-lessees received the sum of £9,600. I have a letter from a very intelligent gentleman describing the condition of this island, and the profitable lease which the Rev. John Lonsdale held under the Crown; and here let me observe that we are not speaking of ancient times, but of what occurred in 1802. Now, sir, I wish to be informed why the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, having ample resources at their command, could not have laid out £10,000 for the embankment of the island, and then have let it to different tenants at an annual rent of £10,000, as well as the Rev. John Lonsdale, who was now clearing £7,000 a year by his speculation, and had been doing so for twenty-five years?

I will now proceed to point out the inadequate considerations which have been taken for the leases of houses. In 1802, two houses in Piccadilly, eight houses in Jermyn-street, as many in Little Jermyn-street, four in Crown and Seepetre-street, and several others in that neighbourhood, making altogether thirty-one houses, in the very best part of London, were let for £125 a year; and

yet, in 1786, this property was estimated at the yearly value of £600, and must now, as every hon. member who hears me well knows, be worth at least many thousands. Nineteen houses in Holborn, near Great Turnstile, were let for £664 a year; and, from an estimate which I desired to be taken of them, I am led to judge that each house is worth from £100 to £130 a year. Three houses in Spring Garden-terrace were let for £236 a year, on condition of £5,550 being expended on the repair of them. I believe that all the houses in Spring Garden-terrace are built upon the same scale, and I think that any single house in that terrace would be cheap at £236 a year. On that point the noble lord opposite can easily set me right if I am wrong, for I believe that the noble lord has rented a house there some time himself. Four houses on the north side of Piccadilly are let on a lease for £260 a year, with £207 for repairs. Three houses on the south side of Pall Mall were let on lease at £350 a year, without any sum being expended for repairs. Now, every gentleman who walks along those streets must see that these are mere nominal rents, and far below their real value. Every one knows that a single house on the south side of Pall Mall must be worth near £350 a year. These lettings are in town. Now for the country. In Huntingdonshire, for instance, there is what I cannot help calling a very singular letting. In the year 1815, a lease for lives was granted at a rent of £107, of property of which the estimated value on oath was £1,104. The lessee in this case was Sir John Throgmorton, and the value, upon the oath of our own surveyors, was £1,104. To prove the inadequate letting of houses, I need not trouble the House with any further instances.

I come next, sir, to what I shall call the inadequate consideration obtained by the department of Woods and Forests for the real estates of the Crown, and I must request the attention of the House to what I cannot help calling an improvident disposition of that property. I find that in the year 1812 the Commissioners sold freehold estates in some of the finest counties in England, comprising ancient manors, and parks, and royalties, for only twenty years' purchase. They sold the manor of Eltham, and all the manorial rights and royalties belonging to it—of which the annual value was represented to be £559 odd—for £11,186 17s. They sold the manor of King's Cliffe, with the courts, demesne, and other lands, and the royalties and appurtenances thereunto belonging, estimated at the annual value of £148, for £3,000. They sold the manor of the chapter of Beverley, with all rents, courts, rights, members, and royalties, demesne lands, and tenements thereto belonging, estimated at the yearly value of £325, for £6,515.

Now, it was impossible to speak of manors, with courts and royalties attached to them, without seeing that they are a species of property which, to many persons, are highly desirable, and therefore eagerly sought. The holding of the courts gives a local distinction to their proprietors. The Commissioners sold such

estates, yielding £1,084 a year, together with a part of the Newmarket race-course, of which the estimated annual value was £150, for the sum of £21,680. These sales, besides, were upon the old rents, which I before had occasion to remark, were merely nominal. They all had land-tax charged upon them, which the Commissioners, however, redeemed previous to disposing of them, as if they were determined to give the purchasers the best bargains in their power. They redeemed the land-tax at thirty-nine years' purchase, and sold it afterwards at twenty years' purchase. I come to a very remarkable transaction which took place in the year 1809, and to which allusion is made in the first report of the Commissioners of his Majesty's Woods and Forests. On the 28th of August, 1809, all the estate, right, title, and interest, remaining in his Majesty, in and upon the hayes or walk of Sullhayfermes; and Shortwood, and Morebay, in the forest of Rockingham, under an act passed in the 36th Geo. III. (1796), to enable his Majesty to grant the same to John Earl of Westmoreland, his heirs and assigns, in fee simple, upon a full and adequate consideration to be paid for the same, was granted away to two gentlemen appointed in that behalf by John Earl of Westmoreland. There was no return made as to the value of this property in the report of the Commissioners of 1786.

The annual value of this property, previously to the year 1796, was stated to be £7 5s. 3d.; but a survey of it having been made at that time, it was declared to be worth £953 15s. 3d., exclusive of the value of the lodges and the timber. So that John Earl of Westmoreland, previous to the year 1796 had been bolding for a rent of £7 5s. 3d., a property which was then declared worth the annual sum of £953 15s. 3d., exclusive of the lodges and timber upon it. Sir, I cannot conceive by what mystery the value of this forest has so entirely escaped the notice of the Commissioners. It was made the subject of a Special Report at an early period in the last century.

This property, which in 1703 was declared worth £50,000, was let to John, Earl of Westmoreland, up to 1796 for £7 5s. 3d., and after that year for £953. John Earl of Westmoreland, at length bought it, and it is worth while to consider what he has given for it. John Earl of Westmoreland I find, sir, gave for it, including the lodges and timber, £10,038 15s. 6d., and that bargain was sanctioned by Act of Parliament. But though that Act was passed in the year 1796, the money was not paid till July, 1809. It was then paid in with interest, computed at the rate of five per cent. on the principal; his lordship had received from it, in the interval, a rental equivalent to ten per cent. Taking it at the former letting, he was receiving £950, and he was paying only £450, being the interest of the purchase-money at five per cent. I mention this circumstance to show that there are transactions connected with the Crown property, which places it in the power of the Commissioners to bring to their aid and to place under their control one-half of the members of both Houses of Parliament. And

here it becomes necessary to consider who are the tenants of this Crown property? It is not usual to find noble lords and hon. gentlemen taking lands of third parties, in order to get a few pounds by the unpaid rent which they may extract from their tenants; nor is it an ordinary circumstance to find them acting the suspicious part of middlemen, unless they are to receive a compensation calculated to assuage the injury done to their pride by such degradation. When, therefore, I see a number of men of rank among the tenants of the Crown property, I cannot help inferring that they derive considerable advantages—solid advantages—for their tenancy. Out of 408 tenants under the Crown, in the year 1786, upwards of 200 were men of title. Now, I cannot conceive that they would have placed themselves in the humiliating situation of being lessees of the Crown Lands, unless they derived great benefit from it. To take one leaf of the book, containing the names of the tenants of the Crown of that day, I find the names of Sir T. Clarges, the Duke of St. Albans, the Earl Bathurst, Lord Viscount Bacon, the Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of Newcastle, the Earl of Lichfield, and many other noble personages; to speak the truth, they are almost co-extensive with the peerage.

I have shown how inconsiderate the Commissioners have been when they have anything to sell. I will next proceed to the converse of that proposition, and will prove to the noble lord how lavish they have been with the public money, whenever they have anything to buy. I wish to ask the noble lord opposite a great constitutional question. Have the Commissioners of his Majesty's Woods and Forests the power to dispose of the money which comes into their hands, in purchasing parcels of land to round off the parks, or to extend the grounds of the royal residence? I may be mistaken in my notions: the money which comes into their hands may belong to the Crown; but if it is under the control of the people, any diversion of it to other purposes, without the leave of the guardians of the people is, in my opinion, a considerable mal-appropriation of the funds of the public.

I find, sir, from these Reports, that at Virginia Water a public-house called the Wheatsheaf has been bought for £5,000, and afterwards let to a gentleman of the name of Ramsbottom, who is a member of this House, for the low rent of £50 a year. Now, if the Commissioners can sell the ancient property of the Crown, with all the courts and royalties attached to it, for twenty years' purchase, surely they ought to take care that they do not purchase land at a high rate, and above all things, they ought to guard against giving such an extraordinary price as 100 years' purchase for a paltry public-house. Then, sir, I find they bought certain premises at Egham, for which they gave £1,100, but they do not let these premises. They also bought certain premises at Windsor, which are occupied by different members of the royal establishment. I also find that they bought the perpetual advowson of the rectory of St. Marylebone of the Duke of Portland for

£40,000; for which outlay of public money we ought to have a return of £2,000 a year. But how stands the fact? They pay annually for the repairs of chapels the sum of £10,000; and they receive annually, in the shape of fees for pews and other emoluments, the sum of £8,000; thus losing, instead of gaining, £2,000 a year by the transaction. This appears to me to be not a very judicious application of the public money.

Lord LOWTHER: It was sanctioned by Act of Parliament.

Mr. HARVEY: I know that there was an Act of Parliament to sanction it, and I likewise know that you may get an Act of Parliament for anything. Then there was £21,000 paid for having the Moat Park estate laid into Windsor Great Park. Then there was a house in Spring Gardens bought of Lord de Clifford for £3,850, for an auditor's office; and yet the Commissioners let three houses of their own adjoining to it for less than £100 a year each. Then, sir, I find there are certain premises at Pimlico, for which they have given £4,096, in addition to £21,000 which they gave for ground in the neighbourhood of Buckingham Palace for the King's Mews. Then they bought at Egham certain premises of the Hon. John Coventry, for £7,350, and afterwards sold them, with their usual providence, to the Hon. R. Westmra for £6,000. Then they bought certain premises at Windsor for £1,350, which they let at 13 guineas a year to a person named Bailey. Sir, I am not aware that the Commissioners have a right either to borrow or to lend money; but it appears, from their Reports, that they first lent the Duke of York £56,000, to assist him in building his house in St. James's Park; that upon his death they bought this house for £81,930, and that they afterwards sold it again for £73,000. By which operation they lost nearly £8,000 of the public money.

I may be told, sir, that there was an Act of Parliament, too, for this. Then I see that in the year 1819 his Grace the Duke of Richmond (I do not know whether I shall gain votes by mentioning names—but I find that in 1819 his grace intimated to the Commissioners that he was ready to accept a fair price for his interest in his house in Privy Gardens. They therefore ordered his interest to be valued, which was found to be worth £5,000. This sum they agreed to give his grace; but then they said (and this is an extraordinary instance of providence), "By the covenant of your lease we have a right to call on your grace to make good certain injuries that befel these premises in 1791. We estimate those injuries at £700, and therefore we shall deduct from the purchase money of £5,000 this sum of £700, for which we have had a lien upon you ever since 1791. Now, upon this I have only one question to ask—how is it that they allowed this lien to remain so long undischarged?"

I have mentioned the name of the Duke of Richmond perhaps unwisely, so far as refers to the fate of my present motion. It may be said by the noble lord that it is true that in past times the property of the Crown was let for inconsiderable sums, much below

their real value, and that the cause was that there was no controlling power by which its real value could be ascertained ; but that in 1786 an expedient was devised which removed that objection, and that expedient was that we now let no property until we have a return of its value given by our own surveyors upon their oaths.

Now, sir, I think that this was not quite so good an expedient as some persons are inclined to imagine it. No man can fail to be struck by the difference of value set upon the same premises by respectable surveyors when examined upon their oaths before juries empanelled to award compensation to persons whose property may be injured by the building of bridges, or any other public work. I have a memorable instance of that difference of opinion within my own experience—a difference which led, upon one occasion, to the loss of my seat in this House. I challenged the qualification of a gentleman who rested it upon some property which he had upon Clapham Common. I had surveyors ready to swear that it was not worth more than £120 or £130 a year. But what then? I was told that if one surveyor would only swear that it was worth £300 a year, it was of no avail if all the rest swore it was not worth half that sum. I will give a few instances of this difference, or rather this conflict of opinion. In the year 1815 the Commissioners of Woods and Forests addressed a letter to the Lords of the Treasury, and complained of the uncertain system of valuation adopted by their surveyors. There are several striking instances of that uncertainty, out of which I will only select a few. In the year 1705 the Black Bear public-house in Piccadilly was let on a lease of thirty years, at the rent of £108. In the course of the improvements which were made in that neighbourhood, it became necessary that that property should be resumed by the Commissioners. The property was accordingly valued. The lessee's interest was estimated at £3,000, and that sum was actually paid by the Commissioners, although the lease was nearly run out. The house, 17, Charles-street, was let by the Commissioners upon a thirty years' lease at £110 a year; within a month after the execution of the lease the tenant let it for £230 a year, thus clearing more than cent. per cent. by his speculation. In the same street, the house No. 43 was let by the Commissioners for £40 a year, and it becoming necessary in the course of the late alterations to repurchase it, £3,000 was paid for it by the Commissioners. In St. Alban's-street, a house, No. 5, was let for £40 a year. The Commissioners, wishing to resume the property, offered the lessee £1,739, which he refused. Five houses in Castle-street were let by the Commissioners for £98 a year in 1810, and immediately afterwards were let by the lessees of the Crown for £328 a year. Such are the effects of these surveys and valuations upon oath; and be it remembered, sir, that these rents were all determined upon oath.

I come now to what I call an extraordinary perversion of every principle of good management. I cannot help considering it the

most singular case of all. Sir John Gregory Shaw obtained a lease of the manor of Eltham, and divers lands, houses, cottages, and other buildings, for twenty-eight years and a-half, from Lady-day, 1806, without the payment of any fine, at the yearly rent of £3,923 19s. And here is a remarkable evidence of the singular accuracy with which the surveys on the part of the Government are made. As soon as his lease was perfected, Sir John Gregory Shaw sublet the various farms of the manor of Eltham by public auction, and sold them for premiums amounting to £25,000, reserving at the same time, to himself, a yearly rent payable during the currency of his lease, exceeding the whole reserved rent paid by him to the Crown. I will next proceed to show the present value of the land revenue of the Crown; and in order to do so as clearly as I can, I will first call the attention of the House to the state and value of the Irish Land Revenue. The gross rental arising from Crown rents, composition rents, quit rents, and rents of farms in Ireland, was estimated, at the survey taken in 1796, at £61,640 18s. 8½d.

In the interval between 1797 and 1827, the Commissioners sold £3,687 out of it, thus leaving a rental of £57,453 12s. 3d. With a view to its sale I estimate it, as it arises from freehold property, as worth twenty-two years' purchase, or at £1,263,961 9s. 6d. To that sum I may add £83,851 19s. 4d., which they now have in hand, from the sale of £3,687 of rent standing in the books of the Bank of Ireland, in the name of the Lord High Treasurer, or the Commissioners of the Treasury. The rack rents amount to £7,800, which, at twenty-two years' purchase, would produce about £156,000, which, added to the former sums I mentioned, will make a total of upwards of a million and a-half. The Commissioners state, in their Report, that there are other properties to which the Crown is entitled in Ireland, which may be estimated at £500,000 more; so that the total available sum arising from the Crown property in Ireland in this manner would be at least £2,000,000 sterling. It may be asked what has been the actual available amount of the entire property. I have now before me a statement of all the money which has been received from this quarter from the year 1793 down to the present year. It appeared that from the year 1793 down to the year 1804, the average receipts were £580,000, and from the year 1804 to the year 1815, were £608,000, and from 1826 to 1829 the receipts were £1,949,120; thus making the total from 1793 to 1829, £5,083,741. I think, if this be so, the House will be of opinion that a large sum ought to have gone into the public coffers; but I will now tell the House how much was made available to public purposes.

For ten years, from 1793 to 1804, the whole sum paid in aid of the revenue was £10,120; from 1805 to 1815, £215,541; from 1816 to 1826, there was paid into the public treasury, out of £2,374,321, but £8,624; and from 1826 to 1829, during which period £1,500,000 were received, not one farthing found its way

into the Exchequer. From this it appears that no more than £234,285 has been actually paid into the Exchequer, leaving a balance to be accounted for of £4,849,456. This is accounted for thus—Expended in the improvements in Marylebone, Regent-street, and Regent's-park, about £2,000,000; for Buckingham Palace, that doubtful ornament of the park, £596,169; estates for the cultivation of timber, £250,000; improvement of forests, £118,181; extraordinary expense for the parks, £189,000; Royal forests, £253,000; Westminster mews, intended for the accommodation of the Members of the two Houses, but really occupied by any persons but those for whom they were built, £56,000; Royal mews, £26,000; making a total of £4,233,763; leaving a balance of £550,000 to be accounted for by Government during the period of the last thirty years. And now let us see what have been the costs of management. If any one will look at the expenses occasioned in the collection of the Crown rents, and at the same time consider the simplicity with which rents can be collected, I think the management here will not a little surprise him. In 1827 the amount of rents collected was £162,222; in 1828, £166,984; and in 1829, £171,585; making a total of £400,791; and the charges of management exceed 20 per cent.

If the House will pardon me, I will now state the actual value of the Crown estates unconnected with the Woods and Forests, and of that portion of them which may be considered as appropriated to the royal possessions. There are 130 manors, worth, on the average, £1,000 each. The annual rental of the freehold estates I calculate at £500,000; and if sold at only twenty-five years' purchase, the sum they would realise would be £12,500,000. The ground rents in London, which would sell for more than forty years' purchase, I set down at £2,000,000. I say forty years at least, and think I am quite justified in doing so after the instances given the other night by the Right Hon. Secretary for the Home Department, of similar properties sold in Birmingham at one hundred years' purchase; and I know that sixty years' purchase may be easily had for ground rents in Regent-street. Waste lands and forests, which amount to 86,000 acres, and which I put down at the low price of £5 per acre, will produce £430,000; rents of houses, which I put at £30,000 a year, and estimate at eighteen years' purchase, will bring £360,000. Allotments under 485 inclosure acts, which have passed within the last forty years, I estimate at £500 each, and these would produce £225,000. Church livings I estimate at £100,000. These I propose should be sold to the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty. The total would yearly realise £20,000,000.

I am aware that I have fatigued the House, and shall therefore proceed to move for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the management of these revenues, so as to render them available for the public service. In doing so, I think I have taken away all subject of complaint or objection on the usual ground of

the comprehensiveness of the inquiry. This is the first motion which has been made, having for its object a specific and definite inquiry into the state of the Crown Lands, and I trust that I have satisfied the House that there is ample employment for the exertions of a vigorous committee. I shall make no appeal to urge the House to do its duty further than this, that I do not think anything can be undertaken which can be productive of greater improvement or more efficient economy, because it includes every desirable purpose—it will add to our resources by a diminution of expense—and it will increase our revenue without augmenting our taxes. This I think the purest specimen of political economy.

I now move, sir, for “a Select Committee to inquire into the Land Revenues of the Crown, under the management of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, and to Report their Opinion as to the Means by which they may be rendered most available for the Public Service.”

